

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and these remarks. Claims 1-22 are currently pending.

In the Office Action, claims 10-22 were allowed. Applicants note with appreciation that the subject matter of these claims has been allowed. In addition, claims 2 and 6-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant notes with appreciation that the subject matter of these claims is deemed to be allowable if rewritten to include all limitations of the superseding and rejected claims.

According to the Office Action, claims 1, 3-5 and 23 are rejected as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,293,677 to Imai. The Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejections set forth in the present office action. However, desiring to expedite the issuance of a patent for the present invention and in view of the Examiner's indications of amendments that would confer allowance, the Applicants have sought to amend the claims in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. In addition, to amending the claims 2 and 6-9, Applicants have also amended claims 3-5 to depend upon allowable claim 2 and cancelled claim 23. No remaining grounds for rejection or objection being given, the claims in their present form are asserted to be patentable over the prior art of record.

As the Applicants have overcome all substantive rejections and objections given by the Examiner and have complied with all requests properly presented by the Examiner, the applicants contend that this Amendment, with the above discussion, overcomes the Examiner's objections to and rejections of the specification pending claims. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of the application. If the Examiner is of the opinion that any issues regarding the status of the claims remain after this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative to expedite resolution of the matter.

Please charge any fees associated herewith, including extension of time fees, to
50-2117.

Respectfully submitted,
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